

PURPOSE OF STUDY: To teach the principles of Biblical Sabbath observance.

TEXTS:

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| 1. EX 3:5-6 (JOS 5:13-15) | 8. NE 13:15-18 |
| 2. EPH 1:3 | 9. LK 23:54 |
| 3. HEB 4:9-10 | 10. LEV 16:23 |
| 4. EX 31:17 | 11. LK 4:16; LEV 23:7 (HEB 10:25) |
| 5. LK 23:32; GE 1:5 | 12. MT 12:11-13 |
| 6. MK 1:32; NE 13:19 | 13. IS 58:13-14 |
| 7. EX 20:10 | 14. LK 10:38-42 |

THE STUDY:

- 1. The Bible says God “hallowed” the Sabbath day, or made it holy. How does God make anything holy? EX 3:5-6 (JOS 5:13-15)**

It is God’s presence that makes anything holy. The desert floor, no different from the ground around it, was suddenly made “holy ground” when the presence of the Lord appeared in the burning bush. The mountain, no different from any other in Judea, became “the holy mountain” when the Father’s presence was manifested in the transfiguration of Christ. In the book of Numbers, there were some men who thought they had the right to be priests, even though they were not of the sons of Aaron. God instructed Moses that, if they were so certain about this, to have them bring golden censers (incense burners) before Him (Num. 16:16-21). These proud and presumptuous men were then consumed from the presence of the Lord, but all the censers were gathered up and used in the temple, as they were now considered holy from being in the presence of the Lord (Num. 16:36-39).

- 2. God also “blessed” the Sabbath day. What did He bless it with? EPH 1:3**

The Bible says that every blessing we receive is ultimately found in Christ. So it is with the Sabbath day. It is being in the presence of God that makes anything holy. Jesus is the blessing of the Sabbath day. It is His personal presence in the Sabbath day that blesses it and makes it holy. Note that God did not hallow or bless any other day. Jesus meets with His people on the Sabbath day in a way unlike any other day.

- 3. Who’s rest do we enter into on the Sabbath? HEB 4:9-10**

God’s rest.

- 4. What kind of rest was God’s rest on the Sabbath? EX 31:17**

God rested “and was refreshed.” Jesus’ work of creation was completed exactly according to His plan, and He rested to enjoy the finished work. On the Sabbath, we enter into His rest, believing that God will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. Keeping the Sabbath holy includes trusting fully in Jesus for salvation and the complete restoration of all created things to their original condition before sin.

- 5. When are we to observe the Sabbath day? LK 23:32; GE 1:5**

According to the Bible, a day is from evening to evening.

- 6. What time does “evening” begin? MK 1:32; NE 13:19**

In the Bible, one day ends and a new day begins at sunset. Evening was reckoned by the setting of the sun. The Sabbath was to be observed from sundown Friday through sundown Saturday. The entire day belongs to God, and is holy (not just a couple hours in the morning for church service).

7. What does the commandment specifically forbid on the Sabbath? EX 20:10

Work by anyone within your ability to control, including strangers and animals. In our day, this would include store cashiers and restaurant servers. Leviticus specifies “customary” or “occupational” work (Lev. 23:7). In other words, all work for wages should cease during the Sabbath hours. All work that can be postponed until later should cease. The only work that should be done during the Sabbath is work that can’t wait, such as caring for the sick, feeding animals, emergency repairs, etc. And even in these instances, regularly scheduled Sabbath work should be avoided if at all possible. Further, as the day is devoted to God, any wages earned in those situations should be given as an offering to His cause.

8. When God’s people were buying and selling on the Sabbath day, what does the Bible say they were doing to it? NE 13:15-18

They were profaning it. All buying and selling should be avoided on the Sabbath. On the one hand, it forces others to work; and on the other, it takes our mind away from spiritual things. Nehemiah clearly implies that it was these kinds of practices that led to the exile of God’s people in Babylon, and therefore warns God’s people against bringing further wrath upon them.

9. What is the day before the Sabbath called? LK 23:54

The preparation.

10. What was to be done on the preparation day? LEV 16:23

Friday, the day before the Sabbath, was called “the preparation.” It was the day to prepare for the Sabbath by doing any cooking, cleaning, buying, selling, etc., so that no unnecessary work would need done during Sabbath hours.

11. Where was Jesus always found on the Sabbath day? LK 4:16; LEV 23:7 (HEB 10:25)

In church. The Sabbath is referred to as a “holy convocation” or gathering. While the Sabbath may be a great time to commune with God in nature, It was never intended to be spent entirely alone. A portion of every Sabbath should be spent in corporate worship in church.

12. What else did Jesus do on the Sabbath? MT 12:11-13

He healed people. This practice of Jesus was to teach us that the Sabbath is an excellent day for ministering to the needs of others.

13. What principles does God give for determining how to spend the Sabbath hours? IS 58:13-14

We are commanded to turn away our foot – that is, stop trampling the Sabbath under our feet – by no longer doing our ways, finding our pleasure, or speaking our words. Rather, we are focus on the Lord and call our time with Him during the Sabbath hours a “delight.”

14. What did Jesus credit Mary with doing when Martha wanted her to work? LK 10:38-42

Mary had chosen “the good part” – to spend time with her honored guest. Martha, although her intentions were good, lost the quality time with Jesus by working on everything else. In the same way, Jesus comes to us as a special guest on the Sabbath day. We, like Mary, should put aside everything that would detract from spending quality time with Him. The purpose of the Sabbath is not merely to cease working; to attend services; to stop shopping and cook your food ahead of time – it is to spend the day at the feet of Jesus and “delight yourself” in the Lord.

*“If a man stops work on Friday evening at sunset, and abstains from all labor until the next day at sunset, merely as a form of worship, and in order that he may be physically better able to go at his work again, or with the thought that he is thereby discharging a duty, and gaining the favor of God – that is not keeping the Sabbath of the Lord. To keep the Sabbath of the Lord is to delight in the Lord. Those who do not delight themselves in the Lord, do not keep His Sabbath, no matter when they abstain from labor.” – E.J. Waggoner, *The Three Sabbaths*, p. 23.*

APPEAL:

The Sabbath is designed by God to give us a break from our regular routines so that we can spend quality time with Him, getting to know Him better and understanding His will for our lives. It is a time for corporate worship, for drawing close to God through nature, and for spiritual communion with family and fellow believers. Jesus has made a special appointment with you on the Sabbath day. Will you commit yourself to clearing *your* schedule on the Sabbath to spend this holy time with Him?